

time, where every tank, every piece of artillery and every humvee is at any moment. And each soldier's movements, radio communications and weapons are continuously monitored.

When a simulated battle is complete, the instructors go through each exercise with the individual unit commanders. They find out what went right, what went wrong, and what can be done to improve. This attention to detail is vital. The only way our nation is going to maintain the best military in the world is to have the best leaders leading the best-trained forces. They're getting that education at the National Training Center.

Countless individuals provide that education. I met two who I'd like to highlight. Colonel J.D. Thurman is Chief of the Operations Group, and Colonel John Rosenberger is Commander of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment. Both men are soldiers. But both are educators. They take their jobs very seriously, and they see the value to what they're doing. It's because of their dedication and skill that our Army turns out commanders for the next century—commanders who will be on the front lines of defending democracy.

I would like to encourage my colleagues on the Senate Armed Services Committee and others in the Senate to visit the National Training Center and see it first hand. You can't leave there without being totally impressed with the dedication of the officers and the enlisted personnel at Fort Irwin and their belief in what they're doing. To see how it enhances the morale and training of units that rotate through NTC, is impressive. This is a national resource that deserves our utmost support.●

RETIREMENT OF JOHN TURNER

● Mr. BUMPERS. Mr. President, John Turner will retire this year after more than twenty-five years of service to the forest products industry. A native of Camden, Arkansas, John is completing a long and distinguished career with the Georgia-Pacific Corporation.

John joined Georgia-Pacific Corporation in 1972 as Public Relations Manager for the Crossett, Arkansas, Division. His responsibilities were expanded to include government relations in 1977 for the states of Alabama, Mississippi, and Arkansas. In 1983, he assumed responsibility for state-level government affairs for the corporation and relocated to Washington, D.C.

In his present position as Vice President of Government Affairs, John has directed and coordinated the corporation's Federal and State government affairs staff and legislative policy for the corporation in Washington and in the eight state office locations.

In addition to a long association with various entities in the forest products industry, John also had a career in radio and television broadcasting. John was educated at Southern Arkansas

University in Magnolia, Arkansas, receiving a degree in communications.

Active in forestry and trade associations, John serves on the American Forest and Paper Association's Energy Council and chairs the Endangered Species Reauthorization Committee. John has also served two terms on the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission and one term on the Arkansas Forestry Commission. He is also a member of the Public Relations Society of America.

Despite his consuming dedication to his industry, John has made time for numerous civic duties, including work with the Jaycees, Lions Club, Rotary Club, Boys Club of America, and United Way. He has served his local community as a city airport commission member and as a member of the hospital board of directors.

Mr. President, I am proud of the association I have had with John Turner over the years. He has been a steadfast friend and a trusted adviser on issues of importance not only to his industry, but to the economy of our beloved State as well. His preparedness, integrity and willingness to compromise have served him and his industry well.

I wish John and his lovely wife Jean a long and relaxing retirement. Perhaps John's retirement from his "day" job will give them time to more faithfully follow their beloved Razorbacks football and basketball teams, as well as enjoy their two daughters and two granddaughters.

Mr. President, John Turner leaves big shoes to fill in the forest products industry. I hope his successors will look to his fine example of the role of the lobbyist and spokesperson in our system.●

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL KEVIN "SPANKY" KIRSCH, USAF

● Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Lieutenant Colonel Kevin "Spanky" Kirsch, United States Air Force, on the occasion of his retirement after over twenty years of exemplary service to our nation. Colonel Kirsch's strong commitment to excellence will leave a lasting impact on the vitality of our nation's military procurement and information technology capabilities. His expertise in these areas will be sorely missed by his colleagues both in the Pentagon and on Capitol Hill.

Before embarking on his Air Force career, Colonel Kirsch worked as an estimator/engineer for Penfield Electric Co. in upstate New York, where he designed and built electrical and mechanical systems for commercial construction. In 1978, Colonel Kirsch received his commission through the Officer Training School at Lackland AFB in San Antonio, TX. Eagerly traveling to Williams AFB in Arizona for flight training, Colonel Kirsch earned his pilot wings after successful training in T-37 and T-38 aircraft.

In 1980, Colonel Kirsch was assigned to Carswell AFB, in Fort Worth, TX, as a co-pilot in the B-52D aircraft. While serving in this capacity on nuclear alert for the next five years, he earned his Masters degree, completed Squadron Officer School and Marine Corps Command and Staff School by correspondence, and earned an engineering specialty code with the Civil Engineering Squadron.

An experienced bomber pilot serving with the 7th Bomb Wing, Colonel Kirsch, then a First Lieutenant, served as the Resource Manager for the Director of Operations—a position normally filled by an officer much more senior in rank. He was selected to the Standardization Evaluation (Stan-Eval) Division and became dual-qualified in the B-52H. Subsequently, he was selected ahead of his peers to be an aircraft commander in the B-52H.

Colonel Kirsch was selected in 1985 as one of the top 1% of the Air Force's captains to participate in the Air Staff Training (ASTRA) program at the Pentagon. His experience during that tour, working in Air Force contracting and legislative affairs, would serve him well in later assignments.

In 1986, Colonel Kirsch returned to flying in the FB-111 aircraft at Plattsburgh AFB, NY. He joined the 529th Bomb Squadron as an aircraft commander and was designated a flight commander shortly thereafter. He employed his computer skills to help automate the scheduling functions at the 380th Bomb Wing and was soon designated chief of bomber scheduling.

Following his tour with the 529th, Colonel Kirsch was assigned to Strategic Air Command (SAC) Headquarters at Offutt AFB, NE. As Chief of the Advanced Weapons Concepts Branch, he served as a liaison with the Department of Energy on nuclear weapons programs and worked on development of new strategic systems—including the B-2 bomber. Colonel Kirsch was one of four officers chosen to be part of the commander-in-chief's (CINC's) staff group to facilitate the transition of SAC to Strategic Command (STRATCOM). Originally picked as a technical advisor for weapon systems, he soon became the legislative liaison for STRATCOM. In this capacity, Colonel Kirsch organized congressional delegations to visit STRATCOM, and managed CINC STRATCOM's interaction with Capitol Hill.

In 1994, Colonel Kirsch traveled here, to Washington, to begin his final assignment on active duty. Initially serving as a military assistant to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs, Colonel Kirsch once again quickly distinguished himself and was designated the special assistant for acquisition and C3 policy. Representing the Secretary of Defense, the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for C3I, Colonel Kirsch managed a myriad of critical initiatives including acquisition reform and information assurance. He